



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
New England District

PUBLIC NOTICE

696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

Date: January 20, 2009
Comment Period Ends: February 20, 2009
File Number: NAE-2004-3990
In Reply Refer To:
Or by e-mail: cori.m.rose@usace.army.mil

The District Engineer has received a permit application from the applicant below to **conduct work in waters of the United States** as described below. The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments on both the project itself and the range of issues to be addressed in the environmental documentation.

APPLICANTS

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), ATTN: Bradley D. Keazer, 628-2 Hebron Avenue, Suite 303, Glastonbury, Connecticut

University of Connecticut (UCONN), ATTN: Richard A. Miller, 31 LeDoyt Road U-3055, Storrs, Connecticut, 06269-3055

Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT), 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, Connecticut 06131

The project is the subject of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the University of Connecticut (UCONN) in coordination with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT), with the Corps of Engineers as a cooperating agency. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published on December 15, 2008. Copies of the DEIS are available for review in the town offices of Mansfield, the Mansfield Public Library, or the CT DOT Offices in Newington, Connecticut.

A **PUBLIC HEARING** involving the FHWA, CT DOT and UCONN has been scheduled for Thursday January 29, 2009 at 7 PM at the University of Connecticut, Bishop Center, Room 7, One Bishop Circle, Storrs, Connecticut 06269. Corps of Engineers representatives will be in attendance at the hearing and available to answer any questions relative to its regulatory review process. Written comments will continue to be accepted by the FHWA, UCONN and CT DOT after the Public Hearing until February 13, 2009. The FHWA and UCONN are the clearinghouse for comments on the DEIS. Please address your comments to Mr. Richard A. Miller, Director of Environmental Policy (UCONN) or Mr. Bradley D. Keazer, Division Administrator FHWA at the addresses noted above. The Corps will be provided copies of the transcript of the hearing and all submitted comments. In addition, the Corps of Engineers will continue to accept comments on its regulatory Public Notice until February 20, 2009.

ACTIVITY

Place fill in waters of the United States in conjunction with the extension of North Hillside Road to provide an alternate entrance to the University and for development of a science and technology academic campus known as the "North Campus." In addition there will be construction of utilities consisting of water, sanitary sewer, storm drainage, telecommunications, primary electrical and natural gas, as well as street lighting and emergency phones. The purpose of the project is to *construct a new access road to serve as a main entrance to the*

university through the extension of the existing North Hillside Road, and to facilitate the development of a UCONN science and technology campus.

The alternatives that the FHWA, UCONN and CT DOT are currently considering fall into the categories of alternative roadway locations, alternative academic facility locations, roadway configuration alternatives, and academic facility configuration alternatives. They are described in more detail below:

No-Build Alternative: Under this alternative, North Hillside Road would not be expanded, traffic on Hunting Lodge Road and State Route 195 will not be relieved, a new gateway entrance to the university will not be constructed, the North Campus science and technology centre will not be built and placement of fill in waters of the United States would not take place.

Off-site Roadway Location: This alternative would involve consideration of a route that would allow for circulation of traffic from the Storrs core academic campus to Route 44 and divert traffic away from residential roads but would not use the existing North Hillside Road or any of the roadway configurations previously considered.

Off-site Academic Facility Alternative: This alternative considers the suitability of the former Mansfield Training School, also known as the Depot Campus, for satellite campus development. The 300 acre parcel was considered in a 1994 Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) report and revisited in a 2001 Master Plan and EIE and would entail development of residual parcels at the site and redevelopment of the existing Depot Campus.

On-site Road Configuration Alternatives: Six options were detailed in the 1994 EIE report. Options A-1, A-2, A-3 and A-4 would utilize the full length of the existing dead end North Hillside Road, three of which would connect to Route 44 and one which would connect to Route 195. Options B-1 and B-2 involved construction of a new road without utilization of the existing North Hillside Road. These six options were further refined and carried forth as Option A (a composite of the A-1 through A-4 alternative) and Option B (a modification of Option B-2), for detailed consideration in future planning documents.

Option A – This option was presented in the 2001 Master Plan and EIE because it was more environmentally sensitive than Option B. This is the alignment that was approved by the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management and the basis for the alignment alternatives considered in the 2008 DEIS. It consists of a 3400 linear foot long roadway that would begin just north of the existing Charter Oak Apartments, extend northward toward U.S. Route 44, and terminate at a new 4-way intersection between two parcels occupied by New Alliance Bank and Bank of America across from Professional Park Drive. The roadway would be 32 feet wide, with two 12-foot wide travel lanes, 4-foot shoulders, a pedestrian walkway on the east side of the roadway, and a separate bicycle lane within the curb line travelling in each direction. Approximately 0.44 acre of impact to inland wetlands and waters is expected to occur with selection of this configuration.

Option B - 4,000 linear foot roadway was selected as the preferred alternative in the 1994 EIE. This alignment went to 50 percent design before being abandoned in the 1990's. This alternative would result in 0.86 acre of impact to inland wetlands and waters.

On-site Academic Facility Configuration Alternatives: Prior to analysis in this DEIS, alternatives for the development of the North Campus were previously analyzed in the 1994 EIE, an Outlying Parcels Master Plan

in 2000, and the North Campus Master Plan and EIE in 2001. Development alternatives have been driven by a combination of the roadway alignment and the desire to avoid impact to inland wetlands and associated buffers while still providing for 1.2 million square feet of building space. The options revisited in 2001 emphasized optimal resource utilization and sustainable design principles with the identification of 12 potential development parcels on both sides of a proposed North Hillside Road extension consistent with the Option A road alignment. Through the 2001 EIE review process, development sites were reduced to 10 parcels. Alternatives currently being considered in this DEIS include:

Alternative 1 - Based on the Option A layout presented in the 1994 EIE, resulting in 8 areas of wetland impact shared with 5 development parcels totalling 2.35 acres of wetland impact as well as numerous encroachments into the 100-foot buffer surrounding the wetlands.

Alternative 2 - Developed based upon planning principles and land uses identified within the 2000 Master Plan and the 2001 EIE, which reduced wetland impacts to 0.97 acre on development Parcel C but still maintains some encroachments into the 100-foot buffer surrounding wetlands.

Alternative 2A - Based on Alternative 2 but with reconfiguration to reduce wetland impacts to 0.47 acre on Parcel C and only minimal encroachment within the 100-foot wetland buffer. Where possible a 100-foot buffer is maintained and in all locations at least a 50-foot wide buffer surrounding wetlands is maintained.

Alternative 2B - Alternative refined to address issues raised by the Corps of Engineers and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection during coordination in 2008. Development on Parcel J is relocated to the former agricultural field between Wetlands A and B to preserve an undisturbed wetland and an amphibian migration corridor and Parcel C is reconfigured to limit site disturbance to the northern side of the existing dirt access road. Wetland impacts from development of Parcel C from this option would be 0.22 acre.

The project alternatives are depicted on the enclosed plans.

MITIGATION

The applicants evaluated 6 potential locations including 4 wetland creation sites and 2 wetland enhancement sites for compensatory wetland mitigation to offset the impact of the proposed development. The proposed compensatory wetland mitigation plan includes the creation of a 2.2 acre area adjacent to an existing farm field and disturbed forested wetland that contains two vernal pools and as designed will provide a replication ratio of 3.9 based on 0.56 acre of wetland impact for the roadway extension and the North Campus development. The created wetlands seek to replicate the existing forested wetland contiguous with the creation area and as such proposed plantings will include mature trees that are being removed from the development areas. The creation area will also include an earthen berm and evergreen barrier to demarcate the wetland creation area from the adjacent farm field and will prevent runoff from farm related activities from entering into the vernal pools, as currently occurs.

The design of the roadway will include amphibian crossings and embedded culverts to allow for amphibian passage to and from the western wetland complex in the location identified to be the primary migration corridor for the species, and the roadway will be designed with vertical barriers to discourage amphibian crossing over the road as well as sloped curbing to reduce the potential for trapping amphibians if access to the roadway is attained. Mitigation measures to address potential impact to vernal pools in the project area include no work within the 100-foot envelope of the upland area surrounding the pools and reported preservation of 85 percent

of the upland habitat within 500 feet of the pool. An undeveloped forested habitat will be maintained around the pools, including canopy and understory. In addition, stream bank restoration will be undertaken along an approximately 200-foot long reach of the intermittent stream, located downstream and east of the proposed roadway crossing. The purpose of this restoration will be offset significant bank erosion that is occurring along the stream as a result of erosive flow velocity and flow periodicity by stabilizing the stream banks, which will improve in stream aquatic habitat and reduce the likelihood of future erosion and associated sediment transport to downstream wetland areas.

WATERWAY AND LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED WORK

This work is proposed in wetlands and unnamed waters associated with Cedar Swamp Brook, Eagleville Brook, Mason Brook and Roberts Brook at North Hillside Road, Storrs, Connecticut. The proposed location on the USGS Tolland quadrangle sheet is at NAD83 coordinates 41.8184677642952 N and -72.265673418692 E, Zone 18.

AUTHORITY

Permits are required pursuant to:

- ☐ Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899
- ☒ Section 404 of the Clean Water Act
- ☐ Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act).

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which may reasonably accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are: conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural value, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain value, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Where the activity involves the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States or the transportation of dredged material for the purpose of disposing it in ocean waters, the evaluation of the impact of the activity in the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act, and/or Section 103 of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 as amended.

- a. The permit area has been extensively modified by previous work.

- b. The permit area has been recently created.
- c. The proposed activity is of limited nature and scope.
- d. Review of the latest published version of the National Register shows that no presence of registered properties listed as being eligible for inclusion therein are in the permit area or general vicinity.
- e. Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer(s)

SECTION 106 COORDINATION

Based on his initial review, the District Engineer has determined that the proposed work may impact properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places. Additional review and consultation to fulfil requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, will be ongoing as part of the permit review process.

ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSULTATION

The New England District, Army Corps of Engineers has reviewed the list of species protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, which might occur at the proposed project site during the construction and subsequent operation/use period sought by the applicant. We have undertaken a Biological Assessment (BA) of the potential for interactions and adverse impacts to those listed species. It is our determination that the proposed activity for which authorization is being sought is designed, situated or will be operated/used in such a manner that it is not likely to adversely affect any Federally listed endangered or threatened species or their designated critical habitat. By this Public Notice, we are requesting that the appropriate Federal Agency concur with our BA determination.

The States of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island have approved **Coastal Zone Management Programs**. Where applicable the applicant states that any proposed activity will comply with and will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the approved Coastal Zone Management Program. By this Public Notice, we are requesting the State concurrence or objection to the applicant's consistency statement.

The following authorizations have been applied for, or have been, or will be obtained:

- (X) Permit, License or Assent from State.
- (X) Permit from Local Wetland Agency or Conservation Commission.
- (X) Water Quality Certification in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

In order to properly evaluate the proposal, we are seeking public comment. Anyone wishing to comment is encouraged to do so. **Comments should be submitted in writing by the above date.** If you have any questions, please contact Cori M. Rose at (978) 318-8306, (800) 343-4789 or (800) 362-4367, if calling from within Massachusetts.

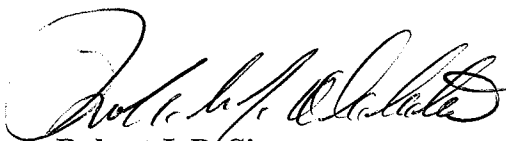
Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for a public hearing shall specifically state the reasons for holding a public hearing. The Corps holds public hearings for the purpose of obtaining public comments when that is the best means for understanding a wide variety of concerns from a diverse segment of the public.

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FILE NO. NAE-2004-3990

The initial determinations made herein will be reviewed in light of facts submitted in response to this notice. All comments will be considered a matter of public record. Copies of letters of objection will be forwarded to the applicant who will normally be requested to contact objectors directly in an effort to reach an understanding.

For more information on the New England District Corps of Engineers programs, visit our website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>.

THIS NOTICE IS NOT AN AUTHORIZATION TO DO ANY WORK.



Robert J. DeSista
Chief, Permits and Enforcement Branch
Regulatory Division

If you would prefer not to continue receiving Public Notices, please contact Ms. Tina Chaisson at (978) 318-8058 or e-mail her at bettina.m.chaisson@usace.army.mil. You may also check here () and return this portion of the Public Notice to: Bettina Chaisson, Regulatory Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

LEGAL NOTICE

The University of Connecticut, in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration and the Connecticut Department of Transportation, will hold a joint design and environmental public hearing for the North Hillside Road Extension, State Project Number 77-215.

The hearing will be concerned with the University of Connecticut's recommended Design Plans and The Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared pursuant to 23 CFR 771.123
For the referenced project.

The public hearing will be held on:
Thursday January 29, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.
At the University of Connecticut, Bishop Center, Room 7
One Bishop Circle, Storrs, CT 06269

The campus community, residents, business owners, and other interested individuals are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to discuss the proposed project.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is available for public inspection at:

Mansfield Town Clerk's Office
Audrey P Beck Municipal Building
4 South Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT (860-429-3302)

Mansfield Public Library
54 Warrenville Road, Mansfield, CT (860-423-2501)

The Connecticut Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Room 2155
Newington, CT 06131

Written statements and exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the hearing regarding the Project Design may be submitted either at the public hearing or may be mailed or delivered on or before February 13, 2008 to the attention of:

Thomas A. Harley, P.E., Manager of Consultant Design
Bureau of Engineering and Highway Operations
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06131

Written comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement may be submitted on or before February 13, 2008 to the attention of:

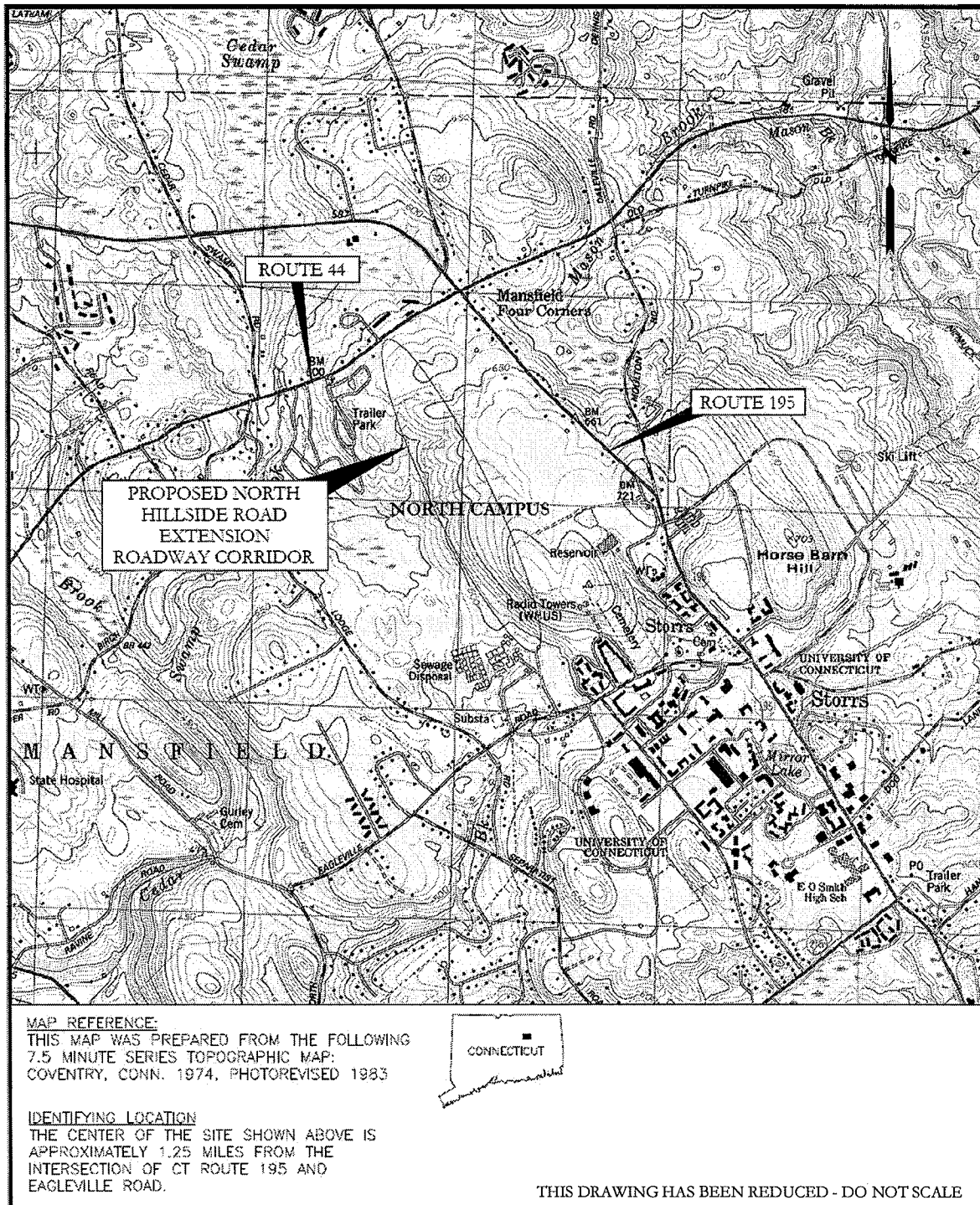
Richard A. Miller
Director of Environmental Policy
University of Connecticut
31 LeDoyt Road U-3055
Storrs, Connecticut, 06269-3055

Bradley D. Keazer
Division Administrator FHWA
628-2 Hebron Avenue, Suite 303
Glastonbury, CT 06033

Such written statements or exhibits must be reproducible in black and white and on paper not to exceed 8 1/2" X 11" in size. These written statements or exhibits will be made a part of the public hearing and will be considered in the same way as oral statements.

Deaf and hearing impaired persons wishing to attend this hearing and requiring an interpreter must make arrangements by contacting the Department of Transportation's Office of Communications (Voice only) at (860) 594-3062 at least five working days prior to the hearing.

Figure 1-1. Locus Map



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| VERT: 1"=100' | |
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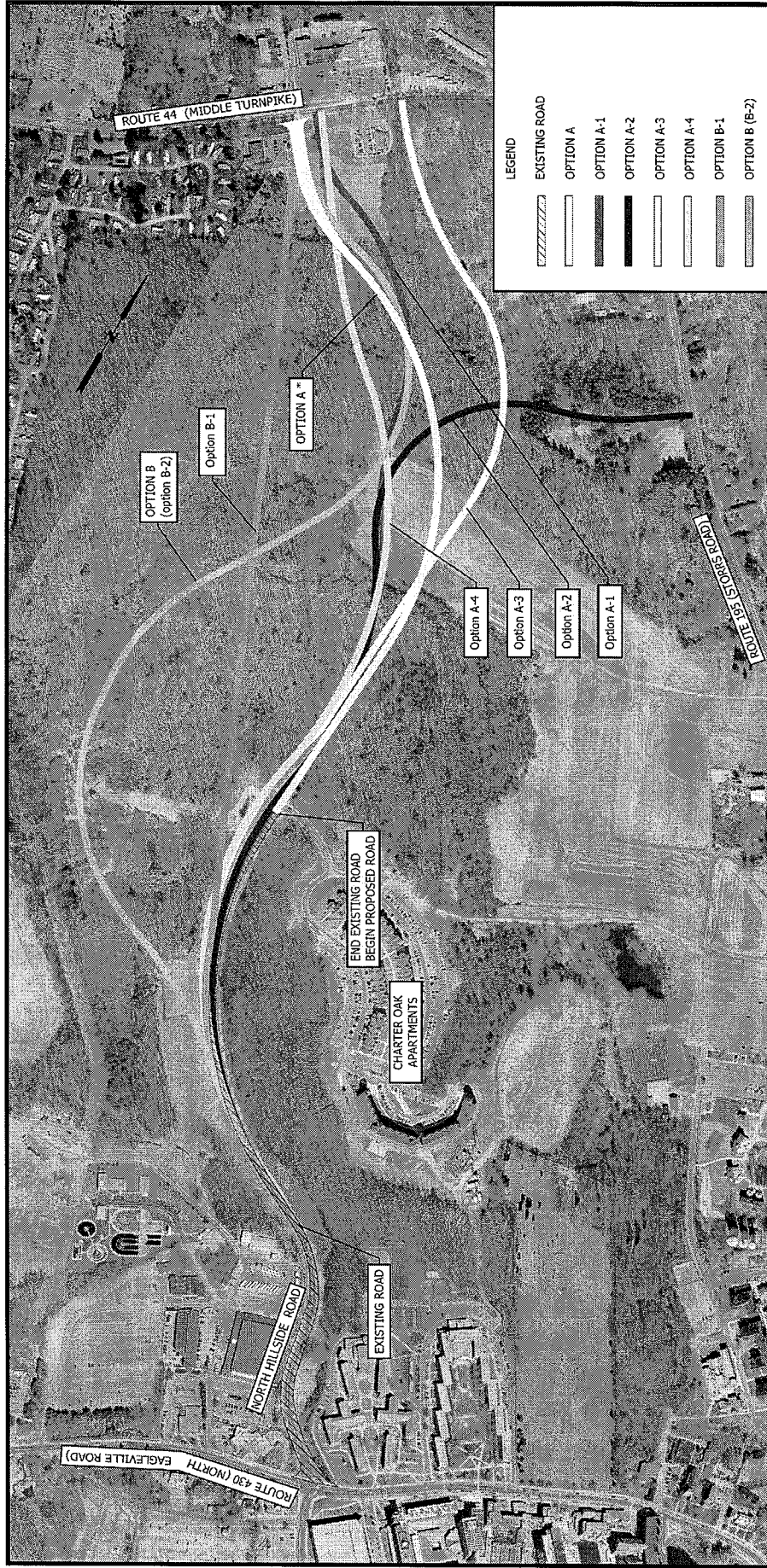
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| THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT |
| LOCUS MAP |
| NORTH HILLSIDE ROAD EXTENSION |
| STORRS CONNECTICUT |

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|-----------------------|
| PROJ No: 20050147.A23 |
| DATE: NOVEMBER 2007 |

Figure 1-2. North Campus Existing Conditions

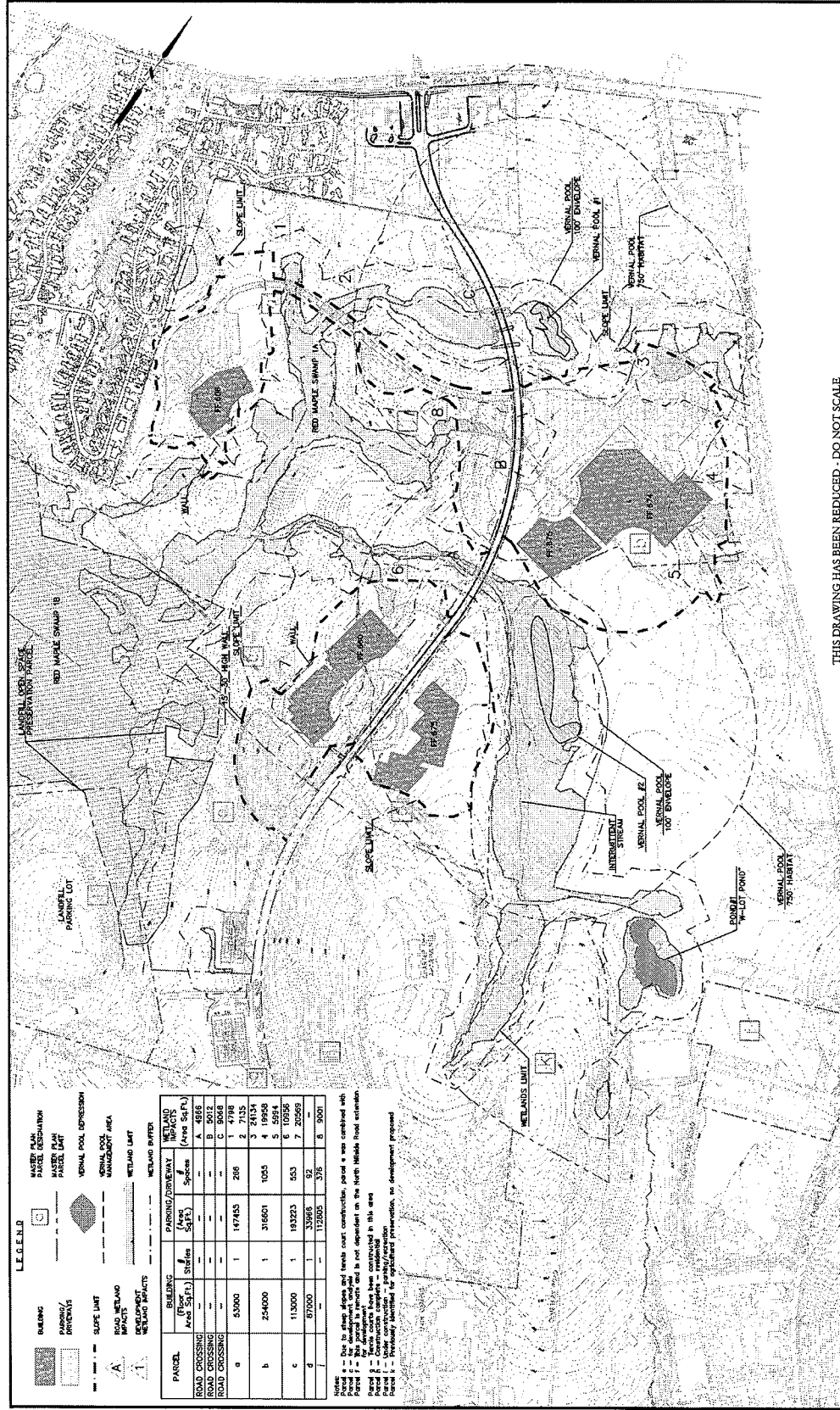


Figure ES-3. Alternative Roadway Alignments Considered



Note: Alternative (Option) A (the proposed alternative from the 1994 and 2001 EIEs and the current design alternative) is a composite of Alternatives A-1 through A-4 in the 1994 EIE. Alternative B is a modification of Alternative B-2 in the 1994 EIE.

Figure 3-2. North Campus Development Alternative 1



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|--|--|--|--|---|--|----------|
| <p>University of Connecticut</p> | | <p>PROJECT #01-006</p> <p>FUSS & O'NEILL</p> <p>Disruptive & Durable</p> <p>146 HARTFORD RD. BRIDGEVILLE, CT 06008 860.596.1488</p> | | <p>NORTH CAMPUS</p> <p>CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT PLAN</p> <p>(1994 EIE)</p> <p>ALT. 1</p> <p>STORIES</p> <p>CONNECTICUT</p> | | <p>1</p> |
| <p>SCALE</p> <p>GRAPHIC SCALE</p> <p>DATE: 01/11/2005</p> <p>BY: J. O'NEILL</p> <p>CHECKED: J. O'NEILL</p> <p>APPROVED: J. O'NEILL</p> | | <p>PROJ. MANAGER</p> <p>PROJECT ENGINEER</p> <p>DESIGNER</p> <p>DRAWN</p> | | <p>DATE: 01/11/2005</p> | | |

Figure 3-3. North Campus Development Alternative 2

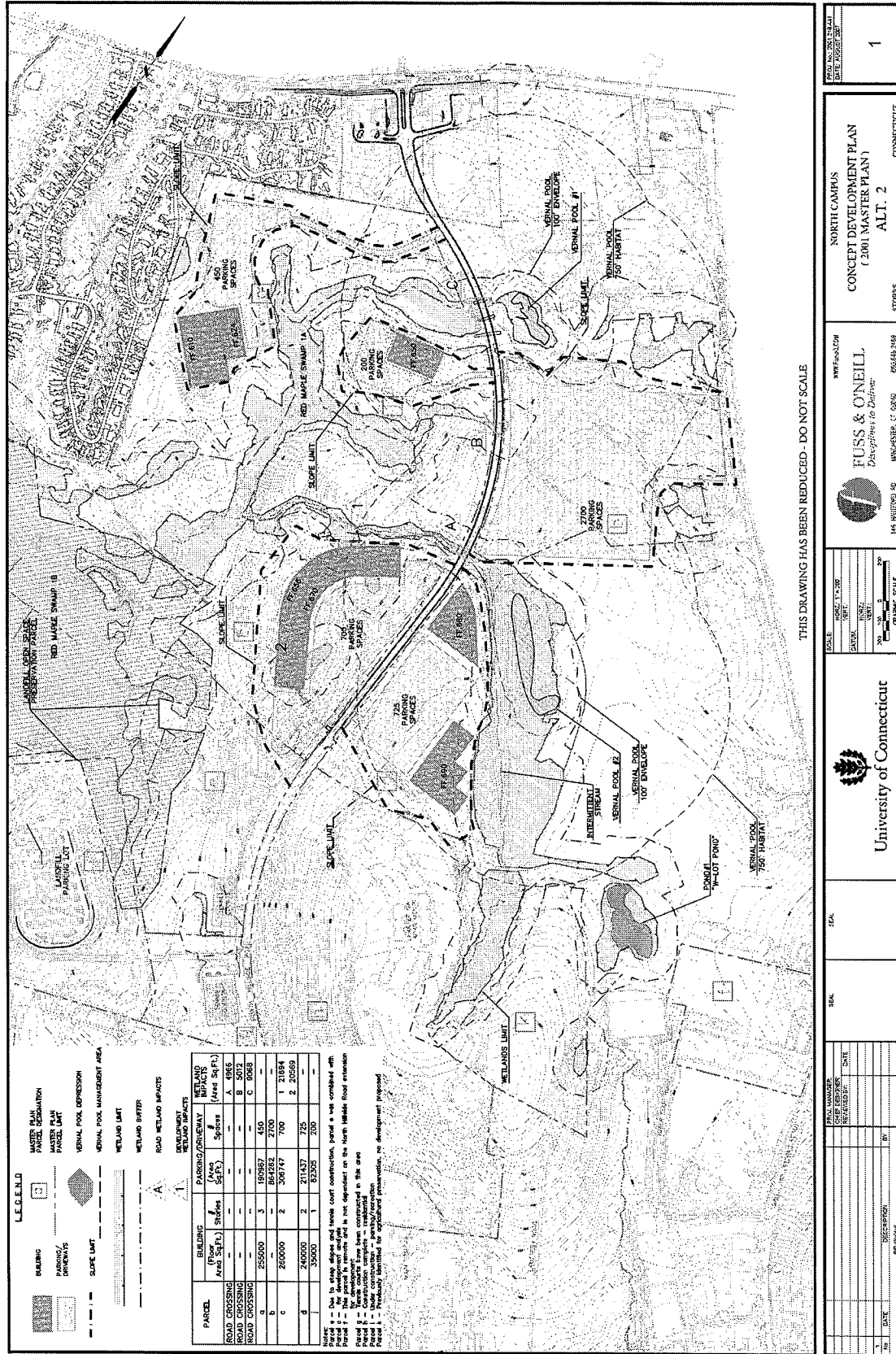
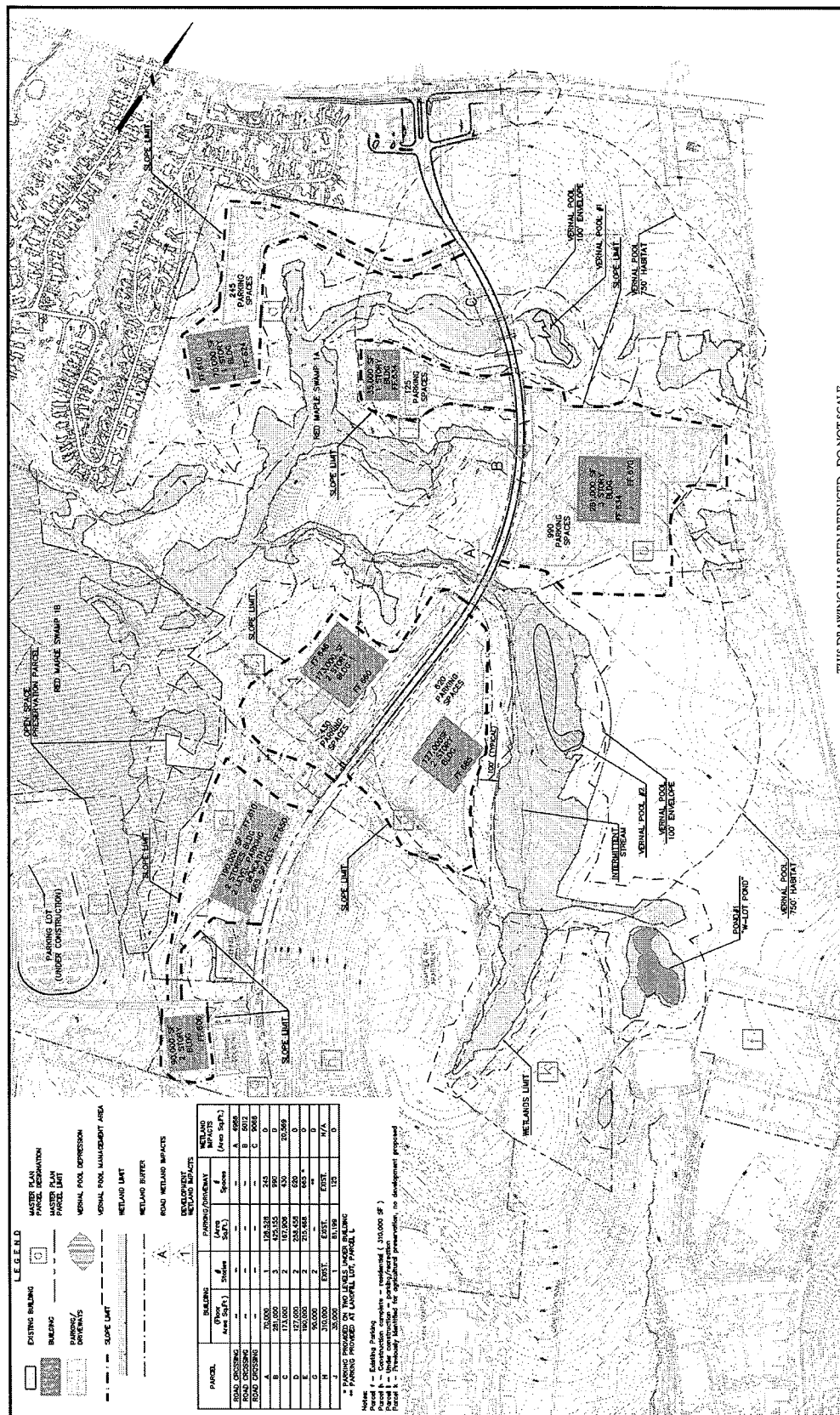
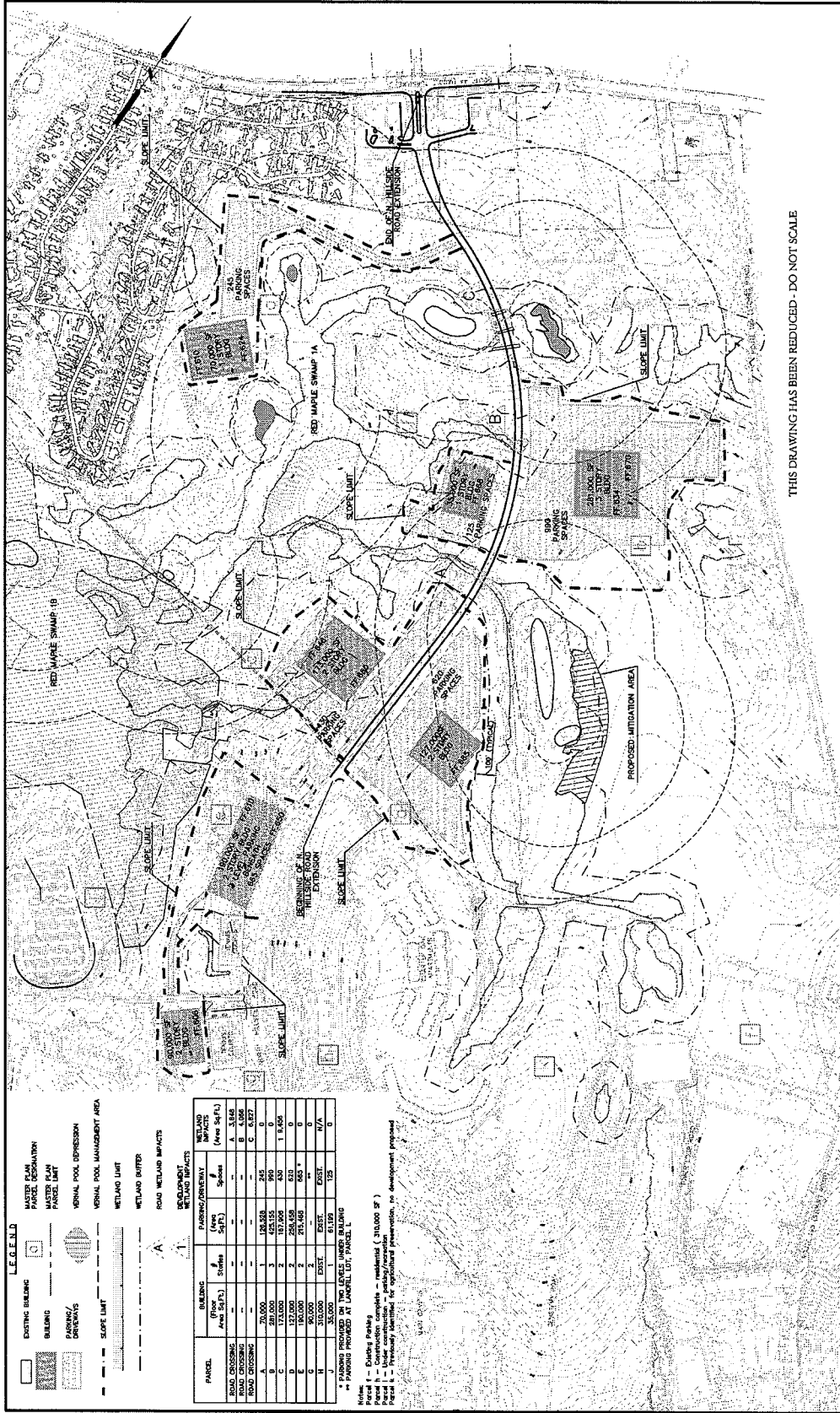


Figure 3-4. North Campus Development Alternative 2A



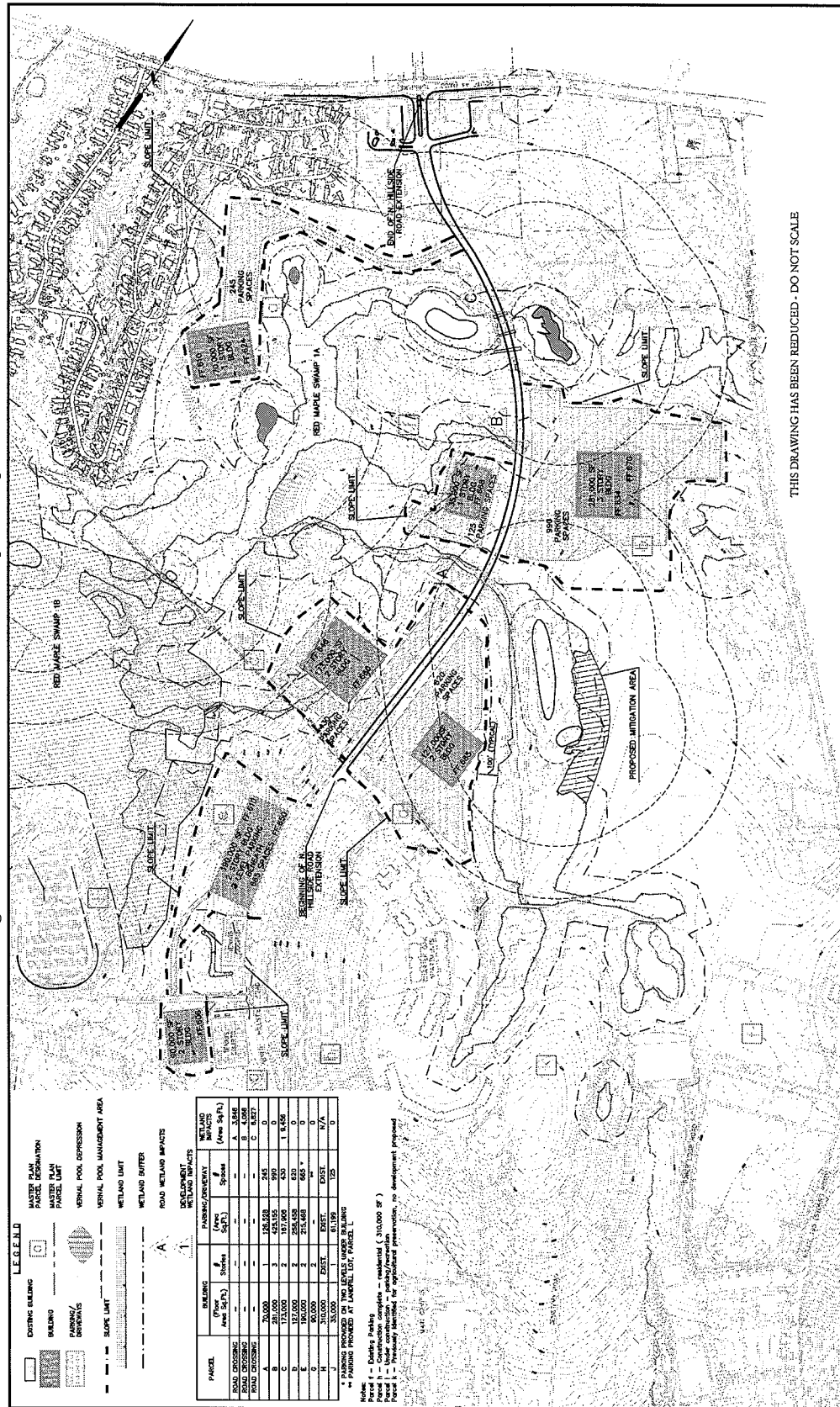
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Figure 3-5. North Campus Development Alternative 2B



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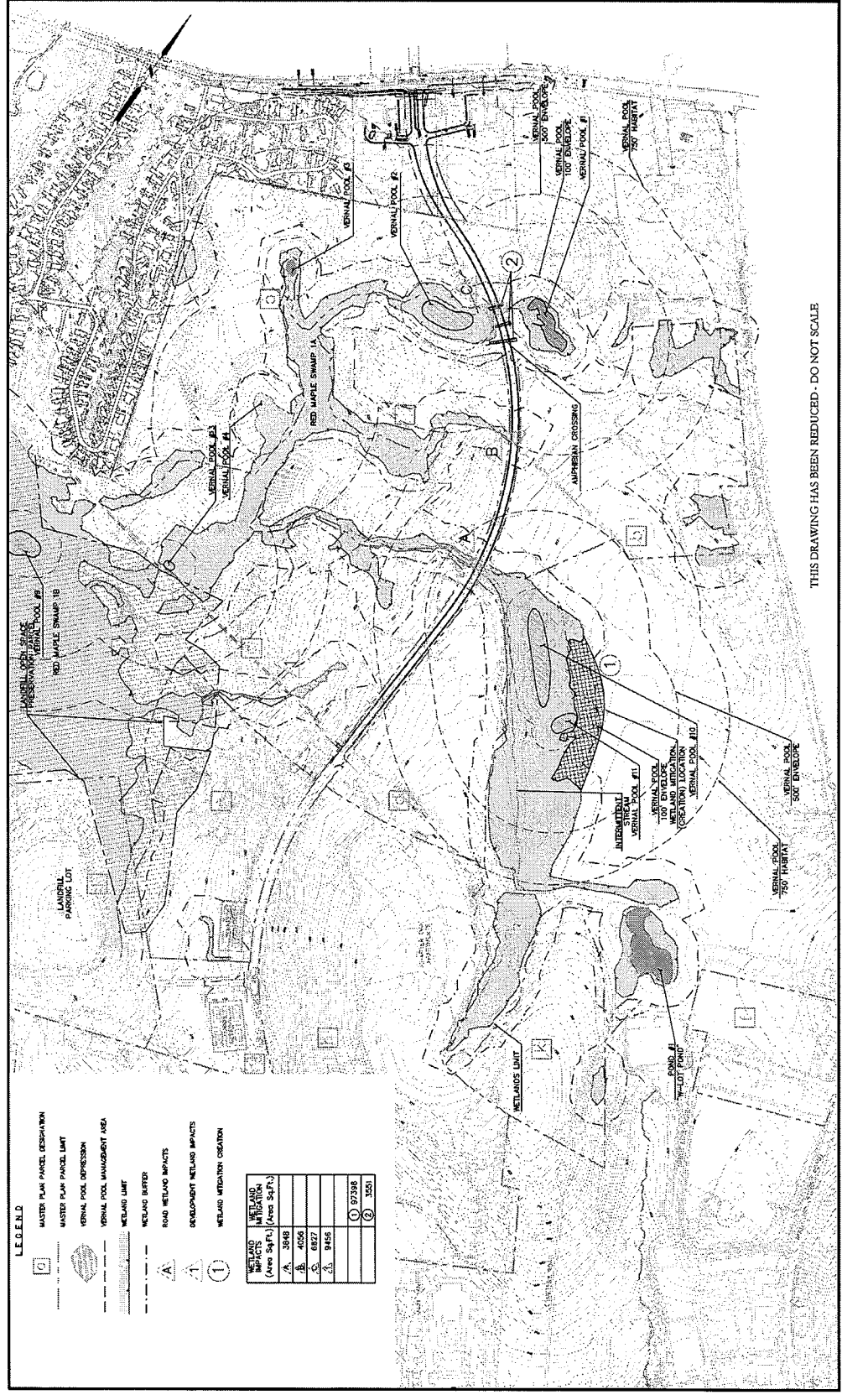
Figure ES-4. DEIS Preferred Alternative - North Campus Development



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Figure 4-10. Wetland Resources, Impacts, and Proposed Mitigation



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| <p>PROJ. NO. 0147-1320 DATE: 02.2.2005</p> | | <p>1</p> |
| <p>NORTH CAMPUS WETLANDS AND VERNAL POOLS MASTER PLAN</p> | | |
| <p>STORAGE</p> | | |
| <p>CONSTRUCT</p> | | |
| <p>REVISIONS</p> | | |
| <p>FUSS & O'NEILL The Urban Architect</p> | | |
| <p>146 NORTH 2ND ST. BRIDGEPORT, CT 06605 TEL: 203.261.9000 FAX: 203.261.9001</p> | | |
| <p>SCALE: 1" = 50' (AS SHOWN) GRAPHIC SCALE: 0' 20' 40'</p> | | |
| <p>UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT</p> | | |
| <p>DATE: 02.2.2005 BY: [Signature] CHECKED BY: [Signature] APPROVED BY: [Signature]</p> | | |